

PLP Self Assessment – Steps, Rationale, and Guiding Questions

Step	Area	Rationale & Description	Guiding Questions
1. Engage School Board to understand conceptual framework and PLP design	Policy	There needs to be unified understanding, support, and buy-in to champion the cause and develop appropriate policy. In addition, this work needs to take place preK-12, and as such, requires coordination from the classroom to the school board. As the school/district moves ahead with implementation, school board members will be needed to support this effort with the public.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there adequate pathways established within the school system to allow for effective implementation of Personalized Learning Plans? 2. What are potential barriers for the school board to support Personalized Learning Plans? 3. What role will the school board play in supporting and communicating about PLPs? 4. How can administrators, teachers and students help the school board understand PLPs?
2. Review current school board policies; identify areas in need of updating	Policy	As a board embarks on a review of current policies with an eye toward flexible pathways and Personalized Learning Plans, a thoughtful analysis of current policies will be required. Members will need to determine key leverage points for policies knowing that a school board cannot create policies for all occasions. It is important to remember that no set of policies can predict all future considerations and must be undertaken jointly with cultural changes and understanding.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does our board's process for policy adoption engage and include community members and educators?
3. Draft new district policies	Policy	New policies will be needed—but such policies need to be targeted to specific issues. In general, fewer but more specific policies are more helpful than a host of broader policies.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can we learn from other districts and adapt policies to our local needs?
4. Implement policy adoption process (if necessary)	Policy	After the policy committee has had ample time to review and revise policies, the full board will want to consider the changes. This might be an appropriate time for parents and the general public to attend a board meeting to learn about the proposed policies and provide feedback. Upon conclusion, the board may choose to consider the public response when finalizing the language of the policy(ies).	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How might the board work with school leadership to raise awareness of proposed changes and elicit feedback?

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5. Pass new district policies (if necessary)	Policy	Following proper decorum, the school board will secure final language of policy as it relates to personal learning plans. The policy will be included in future manuals and available for school and public review at will.	
1. Engage parents and general public in understanding of conceptual framework and PLP design	Public Will	To ensure support from educators and parents, the school board and PLP committee members need to create strategies where public members may explore the purpose of Personalized Learning Plans—how PLPs work, how PLPs can increase student learning, and how PLPs will change learning. Parents and community members need to understand how this work will change the structures of the school including time and locations of learning. Ultimately, the public needs to support these ideas to ensure successful implementation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will community members see this work as a great step forward for student learning? 2. What concerns might parents and community members raise? 3. How will you respond to accolades and concerns?
2. Create a communication plan to share the PLP and its implementation	Public Will	When initiating any new initiative that will have considerable impact on the student learning process, it is important to educate the student body and community on the value of this approach. To do this effectively, a school's PLP committee and administration should devise a clear communication plan with focused and limited talking points that are centered around the outcome expected from this approach to teaching and learning.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the core message the school wants parents, students, and the general public to know about Personalized Learning Plans? 2. What is the process for gathering feedback from constituents regarding this system? 3. Who might be a sounding board for the message and language? 4. How can faculty, students, and school board members be engaged as spokespeople for this work? 5. What process will be used to ensure that messages from different people and buildings are consistent and aligned?

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3. Implement the communication plan with parents & general public	Public Will	Utilizing the relationships that the school community has built with the media and other constituents, school members can implement the communication plan and build collective support for and universal understanding of the intent of Personalized Learning Plans. Miscommunication and mixed messages from the faculty, student body, or misdirected media representatives will result in confusion and doubt related to the value of this approach. The communication from the school should be ongoing and allow for multiple opportunities to envision the concept within the school.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What public forums exist that you might use to share your message? 2. How will school representatives ensure that there are multiple opportunities for parents and the general community to learn about and provide feedback regarding the Personalized Learning Plans? 3. What is the role for students in helping to communicate this work? 4. Who are the champions in the community for this effort and how might they best be used? 5. Who is strongly opposed to this effort? How might you use their concerns to review the implementation plan? 6. How will support be provided to the messengers?

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4. Implement the communication plan with the local media	Public Will	Utilizing the relationship that the school community has built with the media, school members can implement the communication plan and build collective support for and universal understanding of the intent of Personalized Learning Plans. It is vital for schools to consider how its community members engage with media and provide information through those means. Free and social media has become woven into the fabric of daily lives in many families. Schools have the opportunity to deliver consistent messages directly to its community through these varied means in a timely and ongoing manner. It is also essential for schools to consider the roles and responsibilities of faculty and staff with regard to sharing stories of success and responding to inquiries associated with Personalized Learning Plans.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How might free and social media be used to enhance the impact of the message? 2. How might school representatives formulate a relationship with key reporters or bloggers? 3. How might training be provided for administrators regarding how to interact with and answer questions from the media? 4. What process is regularly employed to share success stories with the media? 5. How might support staff be trained to handle media inquiries? 6. How will administrators be encouraged and expected to share and stay on a consistent message? 7. How will internal communications be employed to ensure consistency of message regarding press inquiries and responses?

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1. Establish a school-wide PLP Committee	Practice	Because of the nature and scope of the work to be done, a representative group of school-based faculty members, administrators and students should be formed and be responsible for designing the building-based implementation plan that is aligned with the district plan. This committee needs to be created prior to engaging in this work to ensure support for this effort from those who will implement these strategies.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What knowledge and skills do committee members need to be successful? 2. What other successful initiatives could inform our school's PLP work? 3. How will decisions be made? What is the decision-making authority of the committee? 4. How will our school's curriculum, instruction, and assessment change as a result of students being able to pursue selected pathways and design Personalized Learning Plans to graduate?

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2. Identify/adopt a conceptual framework with faculty	Practice	It is vital to the process that educators in the school develop, determine, and ultimately support the general PLP conceptual framework. The conceptual framework does not include specific components that will be designed later-	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will this work advance student learning? 2. What are the terms, common language, and conceptual understandings that we need to agree on and define for all? 3. What common misunderstandings will need to be addressed? 4. What resources does the faculty need to support the framework?
3. Build the faculty, knowledge base regarding Personalized Learning Plans	Practice	Successful implementation of Personalized Learning Plans depends on faculty and administrators understanding the importance of a shift in the learning process that broadens options for students based on their individual goals, diverse interests and learning styles and their involvement in the design and support structures.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will the school/district ensure that there will be time for discussions around the various facets of the PLP process, to include but not be limited to identifying pathway options and resources, how pathways will align with standards, and PLP design and processes? 2. How will the PLP committee or district administration assess the faculty's comprehension and commitment to PLPs? 3. What opportunities will be made available to faculty to see PLP models in other schools? How will samples and information available on the Internet be used to support a professional review process and discussion?

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4. Engage the faculty and students in the design of the PLP	Practice	Teachers play a key role in working with students to develop, implement, review, and adjust their plans. In many instances, they will be involved in the assessment of students' knowledge and skills as well as the academic standards embedded in students' pathway choices. Having the faculty play a critical role in the design process of the Personalized Learning Plan may help when the school is prepared to launch its communication plan and when implementing PLPs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will a school document progress and achievement in meeting the goals laid out in a student's PLP? 2. How consistent are students' experiences across classes in the same grade or content area? To what extent are the expectations for academic performance and demonstration of learning consistent across pathway options? 3. How does the Personalized Learning Plan template provide opportunity for students to communicate their goals and interests? 4. How does the PLP template provide opportunity for students to establish or select a pathway toward graduation?
5. Identify criteria for acceptable learning pathways	Practice	In order to craft a Personalized Learning Plan, students will want to know the criteria defining acceptable pathways. Establishing the criteria is crucial in order to enable students to create self-designed pathways outside of those created by teachers. An essential component of this work will entail a careful review of Act 77 and an engagement with the full faculty around the concept of multiple and flexible pathways.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will the committee engage faculty in the development of pathways? 2. What school practices, including pathways, already align with students being able to choose personalized learning pathways, and what practices will need to change? 3. What processes will be used with faculty to ensure appropriate levels of rigor, personalization and equity within each pathway? 4. How will the structure of the school change based on the identification of pathways?

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6. Establish a process for students, teachers, and parents to monitor Personalized Learning Plans	Practice	Personalized Learning Plans are most helpful when students are involved in ongoing engagement with their PLPs—not as a “fill in the blanks and move on” exercise. Students will need support to continually revisit and refine their PLPs to ensure deep and ongoing learning.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will the plan encourage consistent and targeted monitoring by faculty, students, and parents? 2. How will the school ensure that the process around the development and monitoring of a student’s plan be consistently employed for all students, including those with IEPs, 504s and other accommodations? 3. How will a school ensure equity of experience in relation to the monitoring and advising of a PLP? 4. How will the school be responsive to suggestions and requests as the model is initially being implemented?
7. Establish a support structure for students engaged in the PLP process	Practice	Creating and engaging in PLPs is a learned skill for students, not something that they can initially tackle on their own. The school needs to create various support structures to ensure that students are able to create their PLPs, take advantage of various learning pathways, and attain both the academic standards expected from every student and their own personal goals.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will the school ensure adequate structural support for sustainable implementation and monitoring of Personalized Learning Plans? 2. How will the parents’ role evolve with the implementation of PLPs? 3. How will the support structures enhance communication and collaboration with community agencies/partners? 4. How will the district ensure timely support for internal needs associated with PLPs?

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8. Develop a system for teachers and students to track and report achievement of student learning	Practice	Schools will want to provide a data collection platform for teachers, students, and parents that will insure easy access to a student's records at any time. The platform should allow for the student to be one of the individuals who enters information (data) about his/her own learning. It is vital that those supporting students in the learning process have access to the student's progress at any given time.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How can we best use technology to enhance our PLP system? 2. What do parents, students and teachers want to know in regard to the outcomes of the PLP? 3. What professional development and support will teachers need to maintain and use the reporting system? 4. Depending upon how we use technology, how will we support families who are not technology rich? 5. What do you want to communicate through a Personalized Learning Plan?
9. Develop a process for evaluating the PLP program on an annual basis.	Practice	It is important for schools to establish an evaluation process to guide continuous improvement of the PLP program. Understanding the impact the program is having on students' abilities to establish personal and learning goals, engage in learning experiences that are relevant to achieving their career, college and academic goals, and improve instructional quality will help stakeholders make necessary adjustments and refinements to the program.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What evidence will need to be collected annually to determine the level of success and areas in need of adjustment? 2. How will the findings of an evaluative review impact the ongoing work around Personalized Learning Plans within the school?

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1. Identify/adopt standards and performance indicators aligned with state academic standards.	Academic Standards	A necessary component of a Personalized Learning Plan is mapping the academic standards against the pathway that the student will follow to demonstrate competency/proficiency and graduate. To conduct this step, a school will need to carefully review the state's academic standards and develop a manageable set of content-specific standards and performance indicators.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How much experience has the faculty had collaboratively working on national or state standards? 2. What standards are crucial for graduation? What knowledge and skills are essential in each content area for graduation? 3. How are we ensuring that our local standards and performance indicators are aligned to the national and state level standards? 4. What process will be used to engage faculty in creating these standards? 5. How will we ensure that our standards are manageable, enduring, and high-leverage? 6. How will we help our faculty unpack the graduation standards to create the performance indicators? 7. How will we ensure that the performance indicators align with the graduation standards and build upon each other as appropriate?
2. Identify/adopt standards and performance indicators aligned with transferable skills	Academic Standards	Personalized learning pathways are designed around the understanding that students will have a carefully crafted approach to meeting standards essential to success in our global society. Cross-curricular graduation standards highlight the transferable skills necessary for success in the 21 st century. Performance indicators provide the detailed descriptions and measurable language associated with these skills.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will our school measure progress and demonstration of these transferable skills? 2. What are our assumptions and experiences about how school faculty understand and support the concept of transferable skills?

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3. Build faculty capacity regarding assessment literacy	Academic Standards	Implementing PLPs requires faculty members to have a deep understanding regarding the various methods to assess student achievement of academic standards, transferrable skills, and individual student goals. Quality assessing of these various components will ensure greater flexibility for students and ultimately increased personalization.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How well do the school's assessments evaluate the knowledge and skills students need for success? 2. How do teachers use formative assessment to guide instruction and provide feedback to students? 3. How do the school's summative assessments ensure students demonstrate the skills and knowledge of the standards? 4. What opportunities do all students have to demonstrate deep understanding of standards? 5. To what extent can students inform/design ways to demonstrate their knowledge and skills? 6. How do teachers use multiple forms of assessment to engage and assess student learning in pathway experiences?
4. Design/adopt assessment structure	Academic Standards	<p>Assessment is a regular and routine part of learning; to successfully implement PLPs, the school needs to identify an assessment structure that will be used to verify achievement of academic standards, transferable skills, and student goals. The structure may include regular classroom assessments, common school wide assessments, performance assessments, and even rubrics to assess a body of evidence.</p> <p>In particular, transferable skills are not demonstrable through a single example of achievement but comprise skills that must be demonstrated over time and across multiple venues. Consequently, the only manner in which these can be assessed is by reviewing a collection of student work – a body of evidence – demonstrating achievement. The process will need to include students collecting their work to prove their achievement and ensure reliability in the scoring process both across students and across scorers.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What assessment methods are better suited for different types of learning standards? 2. What support do students need in order to create and implement unique assessments to determine achievement of their goals? 3. What structures are required to enable students to take and retake assessments? What type of assessments work best in this scenario?

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5. Design/adopt assessments for demonstration of standards and performance indicators	Academic Standards	The actual assessments used to measure achievement of academic standards, transferable skills, and performance indicators need to be of high quality, valid, and deliver repeatable results. In addition, the breadth of assessments must employ a breadth of assessment methods matched to the nuances of the specific standards.	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. What assessment process will be used to ensure that students have demonstrated proficiency in each content area standard?2. Will the results of all performance indicator assessments be used to verify proficiency or will you use some sort of trending strategy?3. What evidence will be used for transferable skills?4. Who will be responsible for assessing transferable skills?5. Is there a process for teachers to share the assessment responsibilities with learning pathway experts?